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ABSTRACT

Virginia's community colleges could easily be more closely linked to the economic and industrial development upgrade occurring through the Commonwealth. The colleges' educational partnership programs, which have recently been stimulated by government encouragement and intercollegiate cooperation, are ready-made facets of industrial training and provide a reciprocal opportunity for regional economic development on a cooperative basis. As partnerhips with business and industry expand, it is important to study existing arrangements as a basis for planning and further development. "The Educational Partnership Inventory," used by Lord Fairfax Community College provides a useful delineation of the appropriate contributions of the educational network and the firms and agencies contracting for services. College contributions include on- and off-campus instruction, program development, non-credit activities, cooperative education, referrals, diagnostic testing, student services, extended learning opportunities, and needs assessment. Industry responsibilities are related to facilities and equipment, incentives, job placement, consultantships, scholarship funds, staff development, and other areas. Also important to the success of these programs are reciprocity between the colleges and regional economic and industrial development organizations, and state-level liaison development. Effective linkages between education and industry will be especially crucial in preparing for the high technology needs of the future. (HB)

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE BUSINESS & INDUSTRY EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: AN ESSENTIAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT LINKAGE

by

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May 16, 1984

JC 840 317

COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BUSINESS & INDUSTRY EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS:
AN ESSENTIAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT LINKAGE

One potential advantage of the twenty-three accredited community colleges in Virginia is the ease with which this regional network could be more closely linked to the economic and industrial development upgrade occurring throughout the Commonwealth. These established institutions represent an essential adult development resource that conforms with the best practices of the industrial development field at this time.

The "Educational Partnerships" programs sponsored by most of the two-year colleges are ready-made facets of industrial training and provide a reciprocal opportunity for regional-based economic development on a cooperative basis. Most recent national indicators include the availability of quality educational facilities and a well trained work force as among the top factors of industrial location, expansion, and renewal of economic resource development programming.

Virginia community colleges have significantly accelerated their Educational Partnerships liaison with business and industry. Typically, Educational Partnerships service from Virginia's community colleges to some business, industrial, trade and professional organizations, and public agencies has been arranged on a limited basis since the earliest years of the colleges' operation. Special training requests to accommodate such groups as the American Institute of Banking (AIB), U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Forest Service, off-campus outreach locations, and selected industrial firms are recipients of increasing instructional services from the colleges on a request basis.

Additionally, the releasing of governmental constraints upon off-campus and non-traditional instructional services delivery in Virginia has combined with governmental encouragement of community college Educational Partnerships as one means of stimulating economic and industrial development to accelerate the Educational Partnerships process.

Further acceleration has been stimulated through cooperative community college participation in Consortiums for Higher Education. The Consortiums are funded and supported by public tax-assisted two-year and four-year institutions within stipulated regions. The Valley of Virginia Consortium, for example, has provided some coordinative leadership through a series of seminars and conferences designed to promote post-secondary Educational Partnerships with business and industry clientele. At the local campus level, these influences have been compatible with institutional directions including increasing emphasis upon customized instructional program services arranged for local business and industry members. There is a growing program of academic credit for on-the-job training through Cooperative Education and Placement Services development targeted more closely to business and industrial trends.

During recent years, colleges have hosted conferences on Business & Industry Educational Partnerships designed to interpret these opportunities to representatives of hundreds of firms and agencies throughout the Commonwealth. Some colleges' innovations of an Extended Learning opportunities procedure for working adults and the Career Studies Certificate program, pioneered in Virginia by Lord Fairfax Community College, have combined to enable all institutions to expand services beyond traditional limits.

As Business & Industry Partnerships are arranged and implemented at a higher frequency than during the earlier years, it is considered important at this stage that a preliminary report be made that would describe the current characteristics of Business

& Industry Educational Partnerships throughout the Commonwealth. This would provide one basis for planning and further development. Succeeding informational reports could describe the emergent characteristics of Educational Partnerships practices in Virginia and track the process of reciprocation between the community colleges and their regional firms or agencies entering into a mutual service agreement.

The following partnership agreement priorities, taken from the "Educational Partnerships Inventory" currently in use at Lord Fairfax Community College describe the appropriate contributions of a community college and its network of related educational institutions and the reciprocal contributions selectively made available from the various firms or agencies entering into a planned agreement for customized college based instructional services.

The Community College will:

1. Enroll and instruct referred adult students in mainstream community college programs and scheduled courses on campus, or
2. Design and instruct off-campus coursework by special arrangement.
3. Design Career Studies Certificate programs by special arrangement. (Degree programs also possible.)
4. Design and schedule specialized non-credit short courses, conferences, seminars, workshops, and symposia.
5. Provide Cooperative Education in-service training credit courses for on-the-job training.
6. Provide referrals to Regional Consortium for Higher Education for Upper Division and Graduate Studies.
7. Provide referral to VCCS Industrial Training Division, Extension Service, Vocational Technical Schools, and JTPA centers.
8. Provide diagnostic testing and life career planning services.
9. Provide library reference service (including by telephone) and library materials for management, research and training needs.
10. Provide consultation, action research, and demonstration projects.

11. Provide Extended Learning Opportunities for part-time adult learners in a planned program.

12. Customize Employee College Educational Needs Survey & Staff Development review.

The Business and Industry Firm, or Agency, will:

1. Designate an organizational representative to publicize the college and help with employee recruitment and enrollment in college programs.

2. Additionally, the Business and Industry Firm, or Agency, may make the following contributions:

   a. Provide adequate off-campus learning facilities and specialized equipment for on-site training.

   b. Maintain specialized training program supports with employee incentives for college program completion.

   c. Provide supportive planning, publicity, and implementation supports for non-credit activities co-sponsored with the college.

   d. Provide Cooperative Education on-the-job supervisor and incentives through Job Placement.

   e. Provide employees with tuition and textbook subsidies through a college expense incentives plan.

   f. Share specialized professional and teaching consultantships.

   g. Include college faculty in industry training programs to maintain current competency.

   h. Provide input concerning types of services needed and contribute toward the acquisition of appropriate materials.

   i. Provide major gifts to College Educational Foundation.

   j. Sponsor Scholarship Fund for community college program students.

   k. Provide reciprocal supports for the community college staff development program (speakers, technology, etc.).

The community college partnerships potential includes liaison with the regional Planning District Commission and the various Economic Development Commissions and

Industrial Development Authorities certified by the Virginia Division of Industrial Development. Liaison between the colleges and the Virginia Division of Industrial Development, Community Resource Development Center at Virginia Tech, and the VCCS Industrial Training Division would be developed to the fullest in accordance with statewide goals.

Within each region, the community college would establish or strengthen its service outreach to economic development agencies and commissions by providing planning updates, informational and technical services, site visitation team support and interpretation of college resources available, and participation in conferences and industrial development training programs.

The reciprocity between the community colleges and the regional array of economic and industrial development organizations will be enhanced by efforts at the state level to coordinate the educational-industrial development liaison on a statewide level. This is imperative as the Commonwealth of Virginia prepares to upgrade its competitive industrial development posture within the Middle-Atlantic and Mid-Southern states.

Nowhere is an executive contribution to statewide planning more sorely needed than in the field of preparedness for technician level advanced science and technology programs anticipated by the community colleges and vocational centers. These programs are particularly volatile at the present time, and the needs of "high-tech" industries do not conform to conventional patterns of community college occupational-technical program development. Staffing and funding, and the supports necessary for "state of the art" facilities and equipment quality assurance will require close liaison with key industrial developers. Given coordination and planning, these preparedness factors are susceptible to a strengthened Business & Industry Educational Partnerships system that overcomes historic limitations.

The development of effective linkages within the Commonwealth is most timely in accommodating the "global stakes" requirements of a dynamic transitional era.

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